

What Is Your Life?

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[0 : 0 0] and welcome to our service this morning special welcome to any who may be visiting with us as we come before god we look to him to bless his word to us we begin by singing to god's praise from psalm 102 psalm 102 and the first version of the psalm singing from verse 11 my days are light unto a shade which doth declining pass and i am dried and withered even like unto the grass but thou lord everlasting art and thy remembrance shall continually endure and be to generations all thou shalt arise and mercy have upon thy scion yet the time to favor her is come the time that thou hast said for in her rubbish and her stones thy servants pleasure take yea they the very dust thereof do favor for her sake so shall the heathen people fear the lord's most holy name and all the kings on earth shall dread thy glory and thy fame when zion by the mighty lord built built up again shall be in glory then and majesty to men appear and so on we are going to sing these verses psalm 102 the first version of the psalm from verse 11 my days are light unto a shade which doth declining pass my days are light unto a shade which doth declining pass and I am dried out with a bed here like a

With the lead here like unto the grass.

But thou, Lord, everlasting art on thy remembrance shall.

Continually, e'er due and be two generations old.

Thou shalt unwise the mercy have upon thy Zion yet.

[3 : 2 3] The time to favor her is come. The time that thou hast said.
For in her rubbish and her stones thy servant's pleasure take.
It is unbearable to fail upon her sake.

So shall the heathen people fear the Lord's most holy name.

And all the kings of earth shall dread thy glory and thy name.

[4 : 5 1] When Zion by the mighty Lord built up again shall be.
In glory then of majesty to men of here shall he.

Let us join together in prayer. Let us pray. O Lord our God, as we gather in your name.

We give thanks that we do have this opportunity to meet. And to resound of your word.
And to seek to worship your great name.

We give thanks that you are a God who is worthy of being worshipped. That you are the alone God who occupies the heavenly throne.

[6 : 0 8] And who surveys the scene of time. As if it was a page in a book. With the ability to take every word that lies on that page.

And assimilate it in detail. And this world that lies before you. Not only as it exists.

But in all its previous existences. Whatever time has introduced into the experience of mankind.

From the point of creation. And even what mysteriously lies before that. You are able to take in.

And to dwell upon it. With scrutiny. And with understanding.

[7 : 21] In a like manner. What you survey that lies before us. That is in the hidden midst of the unknown. As far as we are concerned.

It is fully disclosed to you. The God who is God over all. Your people. However mystified they may be.

By various disclosures. Contained within the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. That speak of the eternity of God.

That speak of the inscrutability of God. That speak of the omnipresence of God. And the omniscience of God.

Truths that declare these characteristics to us. May amaze and bemuse. And yet they rest upon your word.

[8 : 24] By faith. And are pleased to trust in it. And not only are they enabled. To do that. But they take the greatest comfort from it.

When events occur. That they cannot unravel. That are unfathomable. Unfathomable as far as the reason of man is concerned.

And we acknowledge that they are able. As we all who bear the same faith in Christ. Are able. To trust in the God.

Whose control. And whose authority. Lies in diminished. We commit our cares and concerns to you this day.

Thankful that we can come. And pray for the needs of the many and the few. We pray for our homes and our families.

[9 : 23] We pray for our community. Our congregation. We pray for the island. That we are part of. And the islands and the nation that we are part of. We pray for our king. And his queen. We pray for the parliaments.

That govern in his name. We remember. In your presence. The needs that are great. When we discern. In difference.

To the role of law. And in particular. The role of the law of God. We pray. We pray. That you would. Mercy fully. Undertake for us.

And that we would turn. From sin. To yourself. And that we would know what it is. To prostrate ourselves. With penitent.

[10 : 20] Broken hearts. Confessing sin. And seeking by grace. To turn from sin. To Christ. We pray for. The nations of the earth.

And we are. So saddened. By what we. Yet again see. Of the desperate wickedness. That is in the heart of man.

When we. Have. Over time. Seen. So many. Revelations offered. Even in the. Disputes that.

Occurred from time to time. Where nations rise up. Against nations. And yet again. In these recent. Recent days. We see. The awful.

Awful. Nature of. Blood shedding. With. The events in. Gaza. Much in our minds.

[11 : 21] And. The. The terrible. Nature of. The wickedness. That is. Inveiled. There. And we pray. For all affected.

By it. We think of. Families. Left. Destitute. Because. Of. The nature of. The.

Events. That are occurring. As we speak. We think of. Those who are. Demoralized. As they. See the wreckage. Of.

Ruined lives. But more. Importantly. We think of. Those whose. Hearts. Are. Rent.
Asundered. By reason of. Loved.

Once. Being taken. From. Them. In. In. Such. Terrible. Terrible. Ways. Lord. You are. A
God. Who is.

[12 : 14] A God of peace. And we cannot. But seek. That your peace. Would be. Imparted. Even.
To your ancient. People.

The Jews. And. That they would. See. Where through. Peace is found. We can see. How.
Such. Devastation. Is.

Repeated. Throughout the centuries. And the enmity. That lies. In the heart. Of. Of
peoples. That were so. Embroiled.

In. The things. Of God. By reason. Of your. Countenance. Being lifted. Up upon them. In.
The history. Of this world. But.

Race. Part. And. People. Separate. And. The. The terrible. Nature. Of the. Animosity. That
lies.

[13 : 12] In the heart. Is. Kindled. Afresh. In. In the process. Of time. We see that. And. We cannot.
Very probably.

Understand it. Fully. Because. It is not. Our. Experience. So. To that end. We pray. For
the God. Of all grace. To work.

In the darkness. And be a light. In the dark. To all. Who are. Engaged in it. And involved in
it. In whatever way. We remember.

Lord. All. Who have suffered. In recent days. Some. By reason. Of natural calamities.
Earthquakes. Floods. Famines. We see it.

So often. Repeated. In time. And. We pray. Lord. That you would. Remind us. Of the fact.
That this world. Is fragile.

[14 : 08] Because. Of sin. And that the outcome. Of the world's destiny. Lies in your hands. And
that you have decreed. That the day will come.

When. All will. Come to an end. And the earth. Will be folded up. As a vesture. The. World.

As we. See it. And know it. And experience. It will. Be no more. It will be dissolved. With a
fervent heat. And you. In your might.

And power. As you have. Created. By divine fear. The world. In which we live. Creating. In
the space.

Of six days. All. That there is. To survey. And all was very good. So this will be. Brought to
an end. And you will create. New heavens.

[15 : 02] And a new earth. Where in dwells. Righteousness. We cannot. Comprehend. Fully. What
that means. But we trust. Your word. And we pray.

That you would. Encourage us. By it. Remember. Lord. All we commit. To you. Care this
day. Remembering. The needs. Of. Of community. Which may seem.

Trivial. In comparison. To the needs. Of. These war. Torn nations. And yet. We
remember. Families. That have been. Torn. By reason.

Of death. We know. That grief. Grief. Comes. With its own. Effect. On the lives. Of those.
Who are touched. By it. And when you remove. From the scene.

Of time. Those. That were loved. And. Looked up to. Having. Run their race. They are
removed. From this world. And. Their places.

[15 : 57] Never to be filled. By them again. In your church. In your church. These. Vacant places.
Leave. Their own.

Mark. And. As a congregation. We know that. That is. What has taken place. In recent days. And it is. Our desire.

To prayerfully. Seek. That you would fill. The places. That you. Have. Emptied. But. Emptied.

In order. To fill. A place. That was. Waiting for. Your own people. This is what we. Have to remember. That. While.

We may be. Left. Bereft. When loved ones. Are taken. That for them. Their grief.

[16 : 54] Is no more. Their tears. Are assuaged. Their sorrows. Are. Are something. That lies. Behind them.

And the joy. Of the Lord. Is that. Fully. Orbed. Experience. We cannot. Fully. Understand. What it means. To enter into it.

But nothing. But joy. From his hand. Will be that portion. To that end. We pray. That comfort. Would come. To those. Who are. Disconsolate.

Remember. Then. All. Who are visited. By death. Not only. Here. In this community. But elsewhere. We bring them. Before you. And leave them. In your hands.

We pray. Your blessing. On the proclamation. Of truth. Even. In such context. The preaching. Of the world. Today. And the pulpits. Of our land. And beyond.

[17 : 50] We give thanks. For the missionary activity. Of the church. And we pray. That it would bear fruit. And the glory. Shall be yours. In Christ. Continue to watch over us.

And cleanse. From our sins. In Jesus name. We ask all things. Amen. Amen. I'm going to sing again.

To God's praise. This time. Singing from. Psalm 31. Psalm 31. Singing from. Verse 9.

Verse 9 to 14. O Lord. Upon me. Mercy have. For trouble is on me. Mine eye. My belly. And my soul.

With grief. Consumed be. Because my life. With grief. Is spent. My years. With sighs. And groans. My strength.

[18 : 47] Doth fail. And for my sin. Consumed. Are my bones. I was a scorn. To all my foes. And to my friends. Of fear. And specially reproached.

Of those. That were my neighbors. Near. When they me saw. They from me fled. Even so. I am forgot. As men are out of mind.

When dead. I'm like a broken pot. For slander. I have many heard. Fear compassed me. While they. Against me did consult.

And plot. To take my life away. But as for me. O Lord. My trust. Upon thee. I did lay. And I to thee.

The what my God. Did confidently. Say. Let us sing these. Verses. Psalm 31. Verses 9 to 14.

[19 : 47] O Lord. Upon me. Meshach. For trouble. Is on me. O Lord. Upon me.

Mercy. Have. For trouble. Is on me. By thy.

By thy. My belly. My belly. And my soul. With grief.

Consumment. Be. Because. Because. My life.

With grief. Is spent. My years. With eyes. And groans.

[20 : 46] My strength. Avail. Afore. My sin. Consumment.

Consumment. Are. My bones. I was. A. Scorn. To.

All. My. Foes. And. To. My. Friends. A. Fear.

And. Special. For. Special. Me. For. For. For.

Love. The. When they besought the plummy bread, In so I am forgot.

[21 : 58] As men are out of my when dead, I'm like a broken hole.

For slanders I of many heard, Fear compassed me while they I guess he did, Cost out and plot, To take my life away.

But as for me, O Lord, my trust, Upon thee I declare, And I to thee, The word my God, Did confidently say.

I'm going to hear God's word as we find it in the New Testament Scriptures, in the Epistle General of James, and we're reading chapter 4.

The Epistle General of James, chapter 4. We'll read the whole chapter. From whence come wars and fightings among you?

[23 : 58] Come they not hence even of your lusts That war in your members? Ye lust and have not, Ye kill and desire to have, And cannot obtain.

Ye fight and war, Yet ye have not, Because ye ask not. Ye ask and receive not, Because ye ask amiss, That ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, Know ye not that the friendship of the world Is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world Is the enemy of God.

Do you think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us Lusteth to envy, But he giveth more grace?

Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, But giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God, Resist the devil, And he will flee from you.

[25 : 06] Draw nigh to God, And he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, Ye sinners, And purify your hearts, Ye double-minded. Be afflicted, And mourn, And weep.

Let your laughter be turned to mourning, And your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, And he shall lift you up. Speak not even of one of another, Brethren, He that speaketh evil of his brother, And judgeth his brother, Speaketh evil of the law, And judgeth the law.

But if thou judge the law, Thou art not a doer of the law, But a judge. There is one lawgiver, Who is able to save and to destroy. Who art thou that judgest another?

Go to now, Ye that say, Today or tomorrow, We will go into such a city, And continue there a year, And buy and sell and get gain.

Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life, It is even a vapour, That appeareth for a little time, And then vanisheth away.

[26 : 28] For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, We shall live, And do this or that. But now ye rejoice in your postings, All such rejoicing is evil.

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, And doeth it not, To him it is sin. Amen.

And may the Lord add his blessing To a reading of his word, To his name be the praise. We'll sing now from Psalm 39. Psalm 39, And reading at verse 3.

My heart within me Walk'st hot, And while I'm using Was the fire did burn, And from my tongue These words I did let pass.

Mine end and measure of my days, O Lord, unto me show, What is the same That I thereby My frailty well may know. Lo, thou my days And hand-breadth maids, Mine ages in thine eye, As nothing.

[27 : 38] Sure each man at best Is holy vanity. Sure each man walks In a vain show, They vex themselves in vain. He heaps up wealth And doth not know To whom it shall pertain.

And now, O Lord, What wait I for? My hope is fixed on thee. Free me from all my trespasses, The full scorn make not me.

Done was I, Opening not my mouth, Because this work was thine, Thy stroke take from me, By the blow of thine hand, I do pine.

And so on. We're going to sing to verse 8. From verse 3 to verse 8 of Psalm 39. My heart within me, My heart within me, What's it hold?

My heart within me, What's it hold?

[28 : 39] And while I'm using words, The fire did burn out From my tongue, These words I did let pass, Mine end and measure Of my days.

O Lord, Now to me show, What is the same love I then fly, My guilty well-made know, Lo, Lo, Thou my days And breathless Mine ages In thy life As nothing Should reach Man not best Is holy vanity Should each man

Walk said I'll be sure Their excellence He heaps He heaps Of wealth That doth not know To whom It shall pertain And now, O Lord, What which I pour My hope Is fixed On thee Free thee From all My trespasses Thou full-scarred

Ignore Ignore Me Like us to turn now For a short while To the portion of scripture That we read together The epistle of James Chapter 4 And we can read from verse 13 James Chapter 4 13 Go to now ye that say Today or tomorrow We will go into such a city And continue there a year And buy and sell and get gain Whereas ye know not What shall be on the morrow For what is your life?

It is even a vapour That appeareth For a little time And then Varnishes Away And so on Very often I have to confess That if I find myself In a situation Where We are Confronted With death Obviously Somebody else's death And the experiences Connected with that The experiences Of the bereaved The experiences Of Of those Who Are family members How they deal with it What they say About it How they react

[33 : 12] To it And There are so many Different Ways In which we Encounter that And You realise that Everybody Responds to death In different ways We have our own Coping mechanisms We have Ways of Thinking about Death That does That doesn't Necessarily mean That we've Thought through What the Consequences of Our dying Is Or The consequences Of somebody Else's Dying Is And I think It's Important For us To realise That As I often Say And many Like me Say That when

Death Occurs In In any Person's Life In Whoever It is However Close to us They are However Well They are Known By us That God Is speaking To us Through That death I think That's Important That we Hear God's Voice To us In that Death And If we're Not listening Out to What God Is saying To us Then we Do ourselves At the Service And we Abuse The grace That God Has set Before us That allows Us to Think about Well What if It were Me What if It were Me What are The implications For myself You know Sometimes I remember When I Was Unconverted

And I Am a Person My thoughts Were not On what Lay Beyond The The moment Of my Dying But what Was it Going to Be like For those That I Left Behind What was It going To be Like For them I Didn't Like The thought Of them Being Grieved Or Experiencing The pain And the Sorrow Of loss And It's Amazing I Think it's Amazing To me Today How How I Failed At that Moment To even Contemplate What lay Beyond Life In this World For myself And I Sort of

Dismissed It out Of hand Without Giving Any thought To it At that Moment Anyway Which seems Quite Extraordinary But in This Passage Here The Apostle James Is Talking About Many Things And Much Of what He has To say Is Dealing With Wrong Attitudes On the Part Of Those That he Surveys Before Him And In Particular At This Point He's Dealing With The Mindset That Our Life Will Go On As Before And There Are A Lot Of Promises That We Make To Ourselves And Concerning Ourselves That Do

Not Take Any Thought Of The Possibility That What We Expect Will Not Necessarily Come To Fruition Now It Would Be Tempting To Say And It's So Easy To Do That Our Society Modern Society A Contemporary Society Is Completely Oblivious To The Thought Of Death And Give No Thought To It At All That Would Be Wrong It Would Be A Wrong Statement To Make Because We Know That That In The Society That We Live There Are Occasions When We Are Encouraged To Think About Dying To Make A Will That Is Making Provision After Our Death For Some Others So

[38 : 13] Society In A Sense You Are Encouraged Within Society To Live Your Life With The Thought That Well The Time Will Come When You Die Even Those Who Have Pets Are Encouraged To Think About What Will Happen To Their Pets When They Die So In A Sense Society Acknowledges The Fact That We Are Not Going To Live In This World Forever Death Will Be Come But Unfortunately That's Where The Line Is Drawn There Seldom If Ever Do You Come Across In The General Picture That Society Offers To Us A Thought That There Is A Spiritual Dimension To Our Human Experience That Requires Us To Think Of Something Lying Beyond Our Death That We Have Body And Soul That We

Have To Answer To God Who Created Us At The Judgment That Seldom If Ever Comes Into The Thinking Of Society And We Know That Now We Believe On The Basis Of What Scripture Teaches That We Need To To Be Prepared And Our Preparation As Those Who Understand God's Word Requires Us To Be Ready For The Time Of Death In The Only Way That We Can Possibly Be Ready And I Want us To Think Of The Words Of The Apostle Here Although It Comes Within A Certain Context

And The Context I Suppose Largely Has To Do With The Consequences Of What We Say As Much As What We Do And As A Background There You See In Verse 11 He That Speaketh Evil Of His Brother And Judges His Brother Speaketh Evil Of The Law And Judges The Law But If They Judge The Law They Are Not A Doer Of The Law But A Judge And A Lot Of What He Has To Say Has To Do With What We Believe And What We Say As A Consequence Of What We Believe But I Want Us To Look At This Passage And There Are Three Thoughts I Want Us To Look At In Particular There Is An Assumption Made That Leads To A Presumption The First Thing An Assumption That Leads To A Presumption The Second Thing There Are Two Truths That Are Sighted

The First Of These Truths And They Are True It Has To Do With What Lies In The Future And The Second Has To Do With Our Life Leading Up To What Lies In The Future Just A Picture If You Like Of Life In General And The Third Thing Something That Is Overtly Contained In The Teachings Of The Apostle And It Undergirds What He Has To Say Otherwise What He Has To Say Is Irrelevant He Believes That There Is A Reason For Us Who Have A Future To Put Our Trust In God As We Live In The Present In This World Time

Sunday what is said. I've said here an assumption made that leads to be a presumption. So I looked up the word presume and when we presume something we suppose that something is the case on the basis of probability.

[42 : 45] We presume when we suppose that there is something that is going to happen because it probably will on the basis of probability.

But we assume something when we accept something as true without any basis for that belief. There's no proof. We just assume it to be true when we have no evidence to support the assumption.

Now what the apostle is saying here, he's talking to a person as a person and he's using a very recognizable illustration which helps his argument no end.

He's using a financial argument and the businessman who plans ahead and is going to plan to do something on the basis that what he does will be to his advantage.

And that is very often the case. We look at the past and our experience of the past and on the basis of that experience our expectations are formed.

[44 : 17] I don't follow financial markets very closely but I see them and if you're looking for a financial advice you'll see presented to you a graph.

Shall we say a graph? And on that graph it shows you, let's say an investment company is saying put your money in my care and I will look after it.

And this is how it has responded to the way I've used it in the past. And on the graph you'll see peaks and troughs. Sometimes it goes right up and sometimes it comes down.

And on the basis of past performance they would say although there have been troughs, the recovery has always followed.

And the recovery, the spikes in recovery are always higher than the troughs that occur. That's usually the premise that is acted upon.

[45 : 32] And they tell you when you invest your money, invest it for the long term. Because although you might see the value of whatever it is you've committed to go down, it will recover and you will see profit by it.

Now that's the way the markets work. I don't want to simplify it in it because I'm not an expert in this field in any way. But here the assumption that is made is based on a positive perception.

And it leads to a presumption. It is a presumption because it's based entirely on something that is outweighed the control of the person who holds it.

The fact of the matter is the future you promise yourself may not be the same future you had prior to this.

Maybe some of you here will say one week ago I looked ahead to the future and what it helped for me.

[46 : 58] Now one week on I can weigh up how my expectations have been realised. Now maybe nothing dramatic has happened in your life in that week.

But I don't doubt for one minute that there is somebody somewhere who had expectations at the beginning of that week where they looked into their future and thought well it will be like it was before.

And they've discovered it wasn't. It won't ever be the same. The future you promise yourself may not be the same future that you had before.

It won't be the same future you had yesterday. And worse still, if I can put it like that, tomorrow is not promised.

It's never promised. You remember the Lord Jesus taught through parables. And one of the parables he tells us, he uses the illustration of a farmer.

[48 : 15] And the farmer had a very successful season. And he grew crops that made him think, well the storehouses they have are not big enough.

So I need to build bigger ones. I knock down my storehouses and build others. Bigger, better. Now that's wise, is it not?

That's wisdom. If you're anticipating a bigger crop than you can contain within the storehouses you have, then it's only common sense to make provision for that.

However, according to the Lord Jesus, this man made no provision for the possibility that something would occur that would prevent him from actually achieving the prospect that he held out for himself.

There was, well I think the main point is, there was absolutely no spiritual content to the plants that he had.

[49 : 35] He didn't think about God. He didn't think about his soul. He didn't think about the possibility. What if there was no harvest?

What could possibly affect the harvest? Well, maybe anything could affect the harvest. Too much water, not enough water, blight, disease, but more importantly, what if something happened to himself?

What if he died? Where then would he be? The wise man in the book of Proverbs says to us, Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.

And that truth lies at the heart of what the apostle is teaching here. The future is uncertain as far as many things are concerned.

Care is needed just as surely as planning is required. Then he states two truths.

[50 : 46] The first truth, I think, we've already touched on it, but it's emphasized. And that is, we do not know what tomorrow will bring.

We don't know what tomorrow will bring. You know, if you think about the epistle of James, I think, one thing that is repeatedly suggested is that the apostle was writing what he did with the understanding that he gained from listening to the teaching and the preaching of the Lord.

And that there is a heavy emphasis in the teaching that he has here that comes from what we call the Sermon on the Mount.

Much of what James reiterates here owes its origin to the teachings of the Lord Jesus. So that you can find almost in seed form everything that comes to fruition in the way that James emphasizes here.

Jesus also taught, he says, take no thought for tomorrow, for tomorrow will take care of itself. Don't be anxious because there will be enough anxiety on the day without taking these anxieties into the present.

[52 : 28] Now that's a different teaching. But at its heart, it has the same truth. That tomorrow will have its own portion of whatever.

It's not going to be consistent with what we have today. And if we're anxious, if we're worried about tomorrow, because we don't have enough anxieties for today's portion, then we've got a pretty miserable life.

But we cannot know, according to James and according to Jesus, we cannot know what tomorrow brings. And while we must acknowledge that there are no surprises with God, because of his omniscience, because of his omnipresence, because he is all seeing and we are not.

If we plan, our plan should include as much information as it comes from the Lord, as he is pleased to give to us.

Now, he doesn't tell us everything that our future will hold. But he does inform us, and he does help us prepare, so that regardless of what lies in our future, that we are prepared for it.

[53 : 59] James is not telling us not to plan. James is not telling us not to prepare. But he is warning us that no matter how minutely we prepare and plan, that sometimes, because they are our plans and our preparations, they're not necessarily going to work out the way we intend them to.

There's a famous God's poet, Robert Burns. And one of his poems is a poem to a mouse. I'm not going to embarrass myself by doing it in the Scots accent. But a translation of what Burns says is this, The best laid plans of mice and men go often awry and leave us with grief and pain.

Burns was not a theologian, but he had theology in his mind and in his thinking, and a lot of what he had to say, although he was not a man of God by any manner of means.

But some of his poetry, if you were to read it, you will find that he had learned a lot and heard a lot of God's word in his life.

[55 : 26] What he did with it was something else. But he knew this, and probably many of you know this, even though you might not be theologians, even though you might not be professing believers.

You've discovered for yourself that sometimes your plans have not worked out the way that you intended them to. The second truth that we have here is he asks a question.

He asks a question in order to bring something to our attention. What is your life, he says. What is your life?

Well, that's an important question to ask. And he suggests, he makes this comparison.

He says, your life, it is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. And you think of that, that can't be right.

[56 : 36] my life, a vapor that vanishes away. The picture, go out in the winter there and breathe.

And you'll see your breath as it comes out of your mouth or you'll see your friend's breath coming out of his or her mouth. And it's visible.

But the visibility is fleeting. It's just a breath. It's there and then it's not. It's seen and then it becomes invisible.

The science of it explains to you why it's there, what you see. But the apostle is saying, this is my life.

This is your life. And you're saying, that's a very pessimistic way of thinking of living. That's a very pessimistic way of thinking the way that we live our life in this world.

[57 : 51] And you read the obituaries in the national newspapers of the of the prime ministers that die and the queens and the kings that die and the stars that die and their life is set before you in print.

This is their life. They did this. They did that. And they're to be remembered for all that they did and for all that they said. And all it is for many of them perhaps best best forgotten because soon it will be.

Soon it will be. The preacher Warren Wearsby made this comment and I think it deserves to be thought about.

He said when God made Adam when he gave life to Adam he breathed life into his nostrils.

He breathed into him the breath of life. And then he builds on that thought and he says life begins with a breath.

[59 : 14] life continues without breathing. Life ends with our last breath.

It ends with our last breath. It's a very solemn picture encompassing life as it were in terms of our breath.

And the scripture brings that home to us repeatedly. That sometimes we make much of life without at the same time remembering our life.

Whatever we put into it and may God grant to us that we put as much into it as we can for his glory. Not our own for his glory.

glory. But unfortunately many don't live their life for his glory. If you look at the book of Genesis chapter 5 you read it very carefully.

[60 : 22] There's only one person there and it says of him that the point came when he was not. died.

died. And he died. They were not. They came to an end. Their time in this world was at an end. The world we live in has experienced many changes and many of them are not for the better.

But this has not changed. And this is something that we need to remind ourselves of because it involves me.

You have to say that. It involves me. Not somebody else but me. Nobody else is going to die your death except in one respect and that's what the gospel holds up to us.

[61 : 55] That Jesus died. Paul says he died my death. But if our planning, if our forward planning, if our strategy for tomorrow does not include in it this element, just as the financial planner will say, always remember this policy may go down as well as go up.

Always remember your future may be curtailed. Always remember death will come sooner or later and more often than not it is far more soon than we ever give credit to.

What encouragement does undergird what the apostle has to say? Well, clearly, you know, this isn't the major thing that governs his thinking.

He's not a pessimist. He's an optimist. He's not somebody who doesn't know that the future is something that he longs to enter into, especially because of who he is and what he is.

If you go back to chapter 1, when he composes this epistle, when he writes these words, he says to us, blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him.

[63 : 31] He's not talking about this world, he's not talking about being crowned in this world, he's not talking about the adulation that this world has to offer, the crown of life is bestowed by the prince of life, on those who have put their trust in him.

the final chapter, he tells them again, he encourages the church, the believer, to remind themselves, even when they are tied and tested in this world, be patient therefore, brethren, to the coming of the Lord, behold, the husbandman waited for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he received the early and latter rain, be ye also patient, establish your heart, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

James fully believes that whatever the future holds foreign, that it is unpredictable, whatever the tomorrow might contain, that he may not wish to enter into, there are elements that he is content to believe will be his without question.

when we looked at the parable, mentioned the parable of the Lord, I think it's Matthew's gospel, we find it in, that this was something he taught to the disciples, disciples, and I think he wanted the disciples to understand that whatever they craved, whatever they longed for, whatever they desired, it had to be fixed, not on the things of this world, but on a more sure footing.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, where thieves do not break through or steal, for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

[66 : 15] Maybe you have no interest in politics, but they can teach you some things, perhaps unintentionally. Businessmen speak to the politicians, tell us what you're doing, tell us why you're doing it, tell us so that we can plan for the future.

We need certainty, we need assurance, we need confidence. Oh, well, do your plans for the future, do they contain certainty?

do you have assurance from the only source of assurance that whatever your future holds, you are persuaded when death will come that you will be ready for it, that Christ who is your portion in life will be your portion in death.

life, it's important, it's necessary, it's something, you know, people tell you, I'm sure, have you made a will?

Oh, make sure you make a will, it's important, put your house in order, set your affairs right. I wonder if as many say to you, have you put your affairs in order in the sight of God?

[67 : 50] Have you prepared yourself to meet your maker? Are you ready for the day when you will be found at the judgment seat of Christ?

As you will be found. Let us pray. Oh, Lord of God, we pray for your wisdom to be our wisdom.

We pray for our awareness of what this life contains to remind us of the need for making preparation for the life to come that is more certain and more sure because it is contained within the promises that are ye and amen in Christ.

hear our prayers and pardon our sin in Jesus. Amen. for concluding psalm is psalm 116 psalm 116 singing from verse 13 to the end.

I'll of salvation take the cup, on God's name will I call, I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all, dear in God's sight as his saints death, thy servant Lord am I, thy servant sure, thine handmaid's son, my bands thou didst entide, thank offerings I to thee will give, and on God's name will call, I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all, within the courts of God's own house, within the midst of thee, O city of Jerusalem, praise to the Lord, give ye.

[69 : 38] I'll of salvation take the cup, I'll of salvation take the cup, on God's name will I call, I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all.

Dear in God's sight is his sins death, thy servant Lord am I, thy servant, sure, thy hand made son, my bands thou didst untie, thank all the things I to thee will give, and on God's name will call, and in my vows now to the Lord, before his people all.

Within the course of God's own house, within the midst of thee, O city of Jerusalem, praise to the Lord, give me.

Now may grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all, never and always. Amen. Amen.